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That U. S. May Occupy

Stu Rues the No. 2 Spot

By Marie Smith

SEN. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.), who expects to announce his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination Thursday, sharply criticized yesterday the Government's failure to keep the people informed on this country's military strength. He declared, "We

are in danger of not carrying out the people's right to know."

In a luncheon address before members of the Women's National Press Club, he cited examples to prove his point.

Last year, he said, former Secretary of Defense Neil McElroy said the Soviet Union had a three-to-one lead over the United States in the intercontinental ballistic missile field.

This year, he continued, McElroy's successor, Secretary Thomas S. Gates, said as a result of relying on intentions instead of capabilities of the possible enemy, the missile gap was reduced.

Within 10 days, he added, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency gave his figures showing the opposite—the gap was going to widen.

"I think we were justified in asking what's going on here," Symington declared, and added that he agrees with the statement of J. R. Wiggins, executive editor of The Washington Post and president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, who said:

"The opinion of the man who is partially informed is the opinion of those who partially informed him."

IN HIS TALK entitled "The People's Right to Know," Symington charged that the Administration's budgets for defense have been inadequate. Unless there is a shooting war, he said, "they come in with a budget based not on what we need but on what they think we can afford."

He declared that the United States should be spending between \$2.5 and \$3 billion a year for defense and the defense budget

should take into consideration those things that "are part of our over-all strength," including education, health, roads and water resources.

He said the "great drive of the Soviets is a far greater danger than a shooting war; for they're always working in the cold war for their position."

Symington said the two great issues of the coming campaign will be "the importance of doing everything possible to attain just and lasting peace" and the question of "what we're going to do with the United States."

The big argument today is who is strongest. "I we are not careful, it is becoming more and more clear we are going to be a second-rate country," he said, and quoted the late Gen. Hap Arnold who said "a second rate power is worth about as much as a second rate poker player."

"I believe we can afford to be a first class country, and as a people we'll never be satisfied with anything less."